

## **Senate Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness**

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

(August 11, 2003)

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

##### **A. BACKGROUND: CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE, MEMBERS, PROCESS**

###### **1. Charge**

This Committee was established by Faculty Senate action on March 20, 2003, in a Resolution that provided as follows

"WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate at the University of Florida believes that a university is strongest when university governance is shared by faculty and administration

"WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate at the University of Florida believes that a strong and effective Faculty Senate is integral to the process of shared governance; and

"WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate at the University of Florida desires to help make the University of Florida stronger, thus completing the effort to enhance shared governance initiated by University President Charles Young, by further strengthening the University's Faculty Senate and making the Faculty Senate more effective.

"IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, That a committee, designated the Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness and composed of seven members of the Faculty Senate, nominated and elected by the Faculty Senate, will be established on or before the Faculty Senate's meeting of April 17, 2003,

"RESOLVED, That the Faculty Senate directs the Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness to investigate the procedures and practices of other faculty senates around the state and around the nation; and

"RESOLVED, That the Senate directs the Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness to prepare a report a) outlining the best practices of other faculty senates and b) recommending changes in the Constitution and By-Laws of the University of Florida's Faculty Senate, and further directs the Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness to present that report at the November 2003 meeting of the University of Florida's Faculty Senate."

###### **2. Members**

Elizabeth Dale, Chair (Assoc. Prof., History)  
Gene Hemp (Prof., Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering)  
Jed Keesling (Prof., Mathematics)  
Samuel Trickey (Prof., Physics and Chemistry)  
Bryan Weber (Asst. Prof., Nursing)  
Steven Willis (Prof., Law)  
Danaya Wright (Assoc. Prof., Law)

### **3. Process**

Over the course of the summer, the full Committee met four times at length. One smaller working group met several times as well. Unsurprisingly, a considerable amount of work was done by email.

Our efforts have included surveying other web sites regarding procedures and authority for other Faculty Senates, study of writings and evaluations of representative examples of various types of Faculty Senates at major universities, a questionnaire to UF Senators on the current and prospective role and function of the UF Faculty Senate, review of the history and development of the Senate at UF, etc. Both a summary of the results of the questionnaire as well as links to several of the resources consulted are found on the Committee's web site. A Minority Report was prepared by two members of the committee in early August, and so could not be sent out for commentary and reactions. It is attached to this Report, below.

## **B. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS (the Committee Report)**

### **1. Senate Function and Role**

Structure, process, and procedure must follow from function and role. Otherwise they are empty ritual. Thus we came swiftly, directly to the matter of the Senate's current and evolving function and role. We have a clear sense that there is much to be gained by remaking that role and function. The new role and function should be to develop and enact the policy framework within which the administration must function regarding four key areas:

- academic policy and curriculum
- research and scholarship
- academic freedom and faculty rights and responsibilities
- budgeting and strategic planning

We see little value to the institution—and little prospect of respect from the faculty—for an advisory or consultative Senate. The institution's maturity is well beyond that. Unless the Senate has both genuine authority and responsibility for significant aspects of faculty professional lives, there is ample evidence in our study that faculty will simply dismiss the Senate as

irrelevant. In our judgment, there is considerable sentiment along those lines now.

In the same breath, we emphasize that the evolved Senate cannot be successful if it attempts a managerial or executive role. Few faculty have either the time or the detailed expertise to work out the consequences of a policy framework. Instead we recommend that UF make a concerted effort to achieve, swiftly, the foundations for what should become a tradition of policy formation by the Faculty Senate and vigorous, creative, respectful implementation thereof by the Administration.

## **2. Structural Embodiment**

Corresponding to each of the four focus areas listed above there must be four major Senate committees:

- Academic Policy and Curriculum
- Academic Freedom and Faculty Affairs
- Research and Scholarship
- Planning and Budget

In addition, the Senate needs a Steering Committee for managing Senate agenda, workflow, and operations (but not policy) and a Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, Rules, and Legislation. We believe that these five functional areas and one operational one should comprise the fundamental focus of the Senate. From time to time there may be other areas of interest, concern, or need. As with any legislative body, the Senate must be able to establish (and later dismiss) committees, task forces, workgroups, etc. as need be to address those more transient topics.

Within this framework, all of the other current Senate Committees would either be dissolved or, if they served a useful advisory role for the Administration, would become creatures of the Administration alone. Since all of the administrative areas of the University would be required to work within the policy framework adopted by the Senate, those advisory committees would help the Administration achieve that outcome.

A second consequence of this functional and structural change is the need to address such issues as frequency of meetings, duration of service, handling of agenda items, For example, with drastically fewer committees, there would be far fewer reports at each Senate meeting. They would be much more substantive than many reports now heard and they would be presented on a known cycle.

The following recommendations are based on our research, and the feedback we received from people in response to our survey and our request for comments on our initial draft report. In this Report, under each

major section, we have provided a link (labeled “commentary”), where we have set out explanatory remarks. In addition, at the end of this Report, in an Appendix, we have set out links to the various sources on which we relied to prepare the Report.

This is a report of recommendations. If the Senate accepts the report and adopts these recommendations, constitutional language implementing them will have to be written and adopted. In addition, the Senate will have to create a Transition Committee, to work with the Constitution Committee in drafting language (both for the Constitution and the By-Laws) and a timetable for implementing the provisions of this Report.

The Minority Report is appended at the end of this document, prior to the Appendix.

## **I. Structure**

### **A. Senate membership and voting privileges:**

1. There shall be 150 senators, allocated among the colleges of the University of Florida according to the following formula: the Faculty of each college (consistent with current practice) shall elect the number of Senators which is closest to the percentage of 150 which is derived by taking the average of
  - (a) the percentage of the total full-time professorial faculty of the University of Florida (as defined below) who hold their primary appointment in that School, and
  - (b) the percentage of the total number of full-time students at the University of Florida who are enrolled in that School. In computing the number of students, the Senate shall use the criteria employed by the University of Florida, Office of Institutional Research.
  - (c) For the purpose of determining faculty numbers, persons on leave of absence shall be counted, but persons serving solely as replacements for faculty on leave may not be counted.
  - (d) Persons holding professorial appointments in more than one faculty shall be counted only in the college of their primary affiliation.

[Number taken from current Constitution, Article III, section 2, modified by adoption of formula taken from University of Virginia Constitution.]

2. Election of senators:
  - a. Shall be by the faculty, defined as full-time tenure-track or tenured Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, or above, and

all full time (1.00 FTE) non-tenured continuing faculty. [Modified version of current Constitution, Article III, section 2. Modified version of practice at University of Illinois.]

- b. Only those faculty eligible to vote shall be eligible to serve as members of the faculty senate. [Modification of current Constitution, Article III, section 2(A). Consistent with practice at William and Mary.]
  - c. Each academic college and unit shall elect faculty to the Senate before the May meeting of the Senate. [Consistent with expectation at UF, with the addition of requiring that new Senators be elected in time to come to May meeting, consistent with practice at Clemson, required by new nominating process, see below.]
3. The term of office for faculty senators will be three years (staggered). [Consistent with current practice, similar to practice at many universities, including Vanderbilt and Auburn.] No senator may serve more than 2 consecutive terms. If after serving two consecutive terms, a senator wants to run for senate again, 1 three year term must lapse. [From current Constitution, Article III, section 2(A). Consistent with practice at other schools, such as Illinois.]

## **Commentary**

### **B. Officers of the Senate**

1. Officers of the Faculty Senate will be [Modification of current Constitution, Article III, section 3(A), adding treasurer.]:
  - a. chair,
  - b. chair-elect,
  - c. secretary,
  - d. treasurer, and
  - e. parliamentarian and legal counsel.
2. Elections of officers:
  - a. The chair-elect, secretary, and treasurer will be elected from the senate membership, by the senate membership at the April meeting of the Senate. [From current Constitution, Article III, section 3(b)(2). ]
  - b. No person shall hold two offices at one time, except in cases otherwise noted in this document.
  - c. In order to ensure that only active senators hold office, only senators who have at least one year remaining in their terms may run for office, with the exception that in the event a chair-elect's

term would expire in the year he/she were to serve as chair, his/her term as elected senator will be extended for that year.

- d. A nominating committee created by the senate in January each year shall prepare the slate of candidates for each elected office by seeking nominations from among the eligible senators.

3. Duties of elected officers:

- a. Chair [from current Constitution, Article III, section 3, (A)(1), consistent with recommendations of AAUP checklist of traits of effective senates]:
  - To preside at Faculty Senate meetings,
  - To preside at Steering Committee meetings,
  - To cast tie-breaking votes on matters before the Senate,
  - To represent the Faculty Senate at any matter within its jurisdiction, as directed by the Senate,
  - To serve as a member of the Board of Trustees, and
  - To undertake such other activities as the Senate shall direct.
- b. Chair-elect [from current Constitution, Article III, section 3, (A)(2)]:
  - To act as Chair in the event the Chair is absent or otherwise unable to act,
  - To serve as a member of the Senate Steering Committee, and
  - To undertake such other activities as the Senate shall direct.
- c. Secretary [from current Constitution, Article III, section 3, (A)(4), modified]:
  - To keep minutes of the meeting of the senate,
  - To prepare, post and transmit the agenda, minutes, and reports of the Senate as required by the Constitution and By Laws of the Senate,
  - To maintain all records of the Senate,
  - To serve as a member of the Senate Steering Committee, and
  - To undertake such other duties as may be directed by the Senate.
- d. Treasurer:
  - To oversee the budget and expenditures of the senate,
  - To serve as a member of the Senate Steering Committee, and

- To undertake such other duties as may be directed by the Senate.
4. Terms of office for elected officers:
    - a. The term of office for the elected officers (chair, chair-elect, secretary and treasurer) shall be 1 year.
    - b. The term of office for the elected officers shall begin on May 15 or at the May meeting of the Faculty Senate, whichever comes first. [Modification of current Constitution, Article III, section 3(b)(1-3).]
  5. Legal counsel and parliamentarian: To facilitate the work of the senate, a legal counsel and a parliamentarian shall be appointed by the steering committee. [Modification of current practice, which has established parliamentarian]
    - a. These positions may be filled by different people, or the same person may fill both. The person(s) holding the position(s) of parliamentarian/legal counsel shall not be part of the University of Florida legal team nor hold a position in the UF administration. The legal counsel and parliamentarian serve to advise the chair and the Senate on matters that concern the senate and do not have privilege to vote on the senate floor.
    - b. The person holding the office of legal counsel
      - shall be a member of the Florida Bar,
      - shall be knowledgeable about the requirements of the Sunshine Laws and other Florida regulations (including the Florida Education Code).
    - c. Preference in filling the post of legal counsel will be to make the appointment from a member of the faculty of the University of Florida, who will be permitted to count this work as university service and as part of any *pro bono* work required by membership in the Florida Bar.
      - If the person appointed to this position is from the faculty at the University of Florida, he/she shall not simultaneously serve as a member of the Senate representing a college.
      - If no member of the faculty of the University of Florida can be found who is able or willing to hold this position, the Senate shall ask the Levin College of Law faculty to recommend local attorneys to fulfill this function, and will pay an honorarium from its budget for whomever does fulfill this purpose.

**Commentary**

## **C. Steering Committee**

1. Membership:
  - a. The Steering Committee shall consist of 10 voting members, and 2 nonvoting members, as follows: (1) Senate chair, (2) chair-elect, (3) immediate past chair [*ex officio*, nonvoting], (4) secretary, (5) parliamentarian/legal counsel [*ex officio*, nonvoting], (6) chairs of the 5 senate standing committees, (7) 2 senators elected from the Senate membership. [Modification of the process at the University of Virginia.]
  - b. Steering Committee members must be elected senators with active terms.
2. Term of office: Members of the Steering Committee shall serve for one year terms, except that a senator may serve on the Steering Committee in consecutive years if he/she is elected to a different office each time (e.g., the chair of the Research and Scholarship Committee may serve on the Steering Committee one year in that position, and then a second year by virtue of being elected Secretary of the Senate).
3. Duties:
  - a. The Steering Committee shall prepare the agenda for the senate. [From current Constitution, Article III, section 6, (A)(c)]
  - b. During the summer term of each year, the Steering Committee shall determine recommendations for the general agenda and goals of the Senate for the upcoming year. [Consistent with current practice of the UF Senate.]
  - c. Additionally, each summer term the steering committee shall decide whether to recommend the creation of any subcommittees to facilitate the work of the standing committees (and ultimately the Senate).

## **Commentary**

### **D. Committees:**

1. Senate standing committees:
  - a. The Senate shall have five standing committees, in addition to the Steering Committee. [Limited number of standing committees based on practices (modified to fit UF's needs) at University of Virginia, Clemson University, and College of William and Mary.] Their titles (with a brief description of their jurisdiction) are as follows:
    - Academic Freedom and Faculty Affairs (academic issues relating to the faculty, including, but not limited to, tenure and promotion,



academic freedom, creation or dissolution of departments, centers, or colleges) [similar committee found at Illinois, University of Virginia, William and Mary, and other colleges and universities];

- Academic Policy and Curriculum (academic issues relating to student instruction, including but not limited to curriculum changes, instruction, petitions regarding academic standing, requirements for majors, and grading) [similar to standing committees found at UCLA, Clemson];
  - Constitution, Rules and Legislation (drafts all amendments, deletions or additions to the Constitution or by laws of the Faculty Senate, drafts rule changes proposed by the Senate and is consulted by administration on all rule changes proposed by the administration, monitors legislation at the local, state or national level with an impact on UF) [similar to committees found at Illinois, Wisconsin, UCLA, Clemson and other institutions];
  - Planning and Budget (formulates policy with respect to budget priorities involving academics and research, monitors past budget allocations, makes recommendations regarding long range allocations and costs of strategic plans) [similar to committee found at Illinois, UCLA, and William and Mary, among other institutions]; and
  - Research and Scholarship (which includes the library, grants and research contracts, information technology, research infrastructure, and other matters relating to funding or producing scholarship) [William and Mary, UCLA, Clemson, and other institutions].
- b. Each standing committee shall have eleven members elected from the Senate by the Senate (including the committee chair). In addition, the Committee on Constitution, Rules and Legislation will have, as a non-voting *ex officio* member, the parliamentarian/legal counsel.
- c. Membership in standing committees:
- Members of the standing committees must be members of the Senate at the time of their election to the committee and during the time of their membership on the committee.
  - Members of the standing committees shall be elected to serve a one-year term.
  - At the May meeting of the Senate, all members of the Senate (both incoming members and those whose terms have at least one year remaining) shall fill out a form indicating their willingness

to serve on one of the standing committees, or in one of the two at-large seats on the steering committee.

- A slate of candidates for the standing committees shall be compiled from the forms filled out at the May meeting, and the steering committee will establish a ballot based on that slate which will be submitted to the Senators for a vote, by electronic ballot, no later than one week after the May Senate meeting.
  - After the election of members of the standing committees is complete, each standing committee shall meet in May and elect its chair, who shall become a member of the Steering Committee (see discussion of Steering Committee).
- d. Committee chair: The chair of each standing committee shall be a voting member of the Steering Committee, as of the date of his/her election as committee chair.
- e. Any matter brought to the attention of the Senate or Steering Committee by administration, faculty or students shall be referred to one of the five standing committees by the Steering Committee. [Modification of practice set out in Senate By-Law 4, section relating to items for inclusion on the agenda of the Senate.]
- f. Each standing committee shall be defined in the Faculty Senate Constitution, and may only be abolished by an amendment to the Constitution. Likewise, the creation of any additional standing committees must occur through passage of an amendment to the Constitution.
- g. Each standing committee may:
- initiate an investigation or analysis of a matter brought to its attention or of a matter that it becomes aware of on its own initiative, and
  - either investigate or analyze that matter on its own, or create a subcommittee to make the inquiry.
    - If a standing committee chooses to create a subcommittee, the standing committee has the authority to determine how that subcommittee shall be constituted (whether of senators, of faculty not in the Senate, of faculty and administrators, of faculty and students, of faculty and staff).
    - All reports of subcommittees shall be presented to the standing committee, who will then report as it sees fit to the Senate.
- h. Each standing committee will report to the Senate at each Senate meeting.

- In addition to preparing regular reports for the Senate of its activity, each standing committee will bring matters and resolutions to the Senate for consideration.
2. Other senate committees:
    - a. The faculty senate may, by resolution, create a committee to investigate any issue. In the resolution creating the committee, the Senate shall establish the composition of that committee, the nature of its charge, the time period of its work, and how its membership will be selected.
    - b. All committees created by the senate by resolution shall report to the most appropriate standing committee, unless the Senate resolution creating the committee decrees otherwise.
  3. Joint Committees:
    - a. No university-level committees, task forces, forums, or working groups at the University of Florida shall be characterized as “Joint” or “Faculty” unless they are created with the agreement of the Faculty Senate, by a vote of the Senate. [Modification of current provision, Constitution, Article III, section 6, (A)(3) (to include joint committees created with groups other than the administration. Closes current loophole, which apparently permits the creation of “Joint Task Forces” without the participation of the Senate. Consistent with recommendations for effective senates, prepared by AAUP.)]
    - b. The Senate may, at the recommendation of a standing committee or as a result of a resolution passed by the Faculty Senate, create a joint committee with the administration, the student body, the staff, or the faculty union. [See note above.]
    - c. Any joint committee/task force/forum/working group created according to this process will report back to the most appropriate standing committee, which will report on its work to the Senate.
  4. Other committees:
    - a. Any committee created by any process not outlined in this document is not a Senate committee, and does not act for the Senate. [Deals with loophole noted in discussion of joint committees, above.]
    - b. All university committees not created by the faculty senate that deal with matters within the purview of the standing committees shall report to the appropriate standing committee of the Senate. [Modeled on practice at a number of universities, including Illinois.]

**Commentary**

## **II. Effectiveness:**

### **A. Meetings:**

1. Regular meetings:
  - a. The Senate shall meet once a month throughout the academic year, from September through May for 2 hours. [Modeled on current practice.]
  - b. A quorum of 50%, or 75 senators, is required for the Senate to vote on any matter during these regularly scheduled meetings. [Consistent with practice at Illinois and Virginia, other schools require 50% plus one senator to establish a quorum, see Tennessee, FSU.]
2. Emergency meetings:
  - a. Emergency meetings may be called at any time during the academic year or during the summer by the Steering Committee, or by written request of 15 senators. [Provision for emergency meetings consistent with practice at many universities, including Illinois, Auburn.]
  - b. Notice of emergency meetings must be sent to the full senate membership at least seven days prior to the emergency meeting.
  - c. A quorum of 20%, or 30 senators, is required for the Senate to take action during any emergency meeting.
  - d. Any action taken during an emergency meeting must be ratified by the full Senate at its next regularly-scheduled meeting.

### **Commentary**

#### **B. Agenda:**

1. The agenda must be published at least seven days in advance of all regular meetings. [Reflects a tightening up of the provisions currently set out in By-Law 4.]
2. No action may be taken at a meeting for which the agenda was not published seven days in advance. [Tightening up of provisions in current By-Law 4, consistent with AAUP checklist of traits of effective senates]
3. Items not on the agenda may be considered following a motion approved by a 2/3 majority vote of Senators present at the meeting.
4. Items may be placed on the agenda for action in the following ways:
  - a. Steering Committee decision. The Steering Committee may place any item on the agenda by its own decision. [Consistent with current practice and By-Law 4.]

- b. Standing Committee decision. Any of the five Standing Committees may, as part of its report to the Senate, place an item on the agenda for discussion or action. Any person may request that a committee consider an issue and place it on the agenda, but the committee's decision to table or forward an issue is final. [Consistent with current practice and By-Law 4.]
- c. Written request: Any senator or member of the university faculty may request that an item be placed on the agenda. [Consistent with current practice and By-Law 4.]
  - Such a request must be made in writing to the Steering Committee at least 10 days prior to the meeting.
  - With the request, the requesting party must submit a written statement in support of the agenda item for distribution to the full Senate at the time the agenda is distributed.
- d. From the floor: None of the foregoing processes preclude any Senator from placing an item on the agenda by written request or from the floor, any Senator may request that an item be discussed and acted upon at a meeting by a motion from the floor during the consideration of New Business.
  - This item may not be discussed or acted upon except upon a 2/3 majority vote by those Senators present to amend the agenda to include the new item.

### **Commentary**

#### **C. Order of the Agenda:**

1. The order of the agenda shall be as follows:
  - a. Ratification of minutes of previous meeting
  - b. Report on University Affairs (President's Office) (5 minutes report, 5 minutes Q&A)
  - c. Report on Academic Affairs (Provost's Office) (5 minutes report, 5 minutes Q&A)
  - d. Consent Agenda
  - e. Reports of Standing Committees, Senate Committees and any motions or resolutions presented by Committee
  - f. New Business
2. Reports on University and Academic Affairs:
  - a. The time allocated for the Reports on University and Academic Affairs may not be altered except upon request in advance to the steering committee.

- b. The President and/or Provost may appoint anyone to speak during his/her allotted time.
3. Consent agenda:
- a. The Steering Committee shall put only those matters on the consent agenda that it deems informational or suitable for automatic consent. [From Wisconsin practice.]
  - b. Items may be moved off the consent agenda by motion and a majority vote from the floor.
  - c. A motion to move a matter off the consent agenda is not debatable and needs no second.
4. Reports of committees:
- a. The Steering Committee will decide whether a committee report should be presented orally at a senate meeting, or if publication of the report is sufficient.
  - b. When the Steering Committee has determined that no presentation is necessary, a senator may move that the report be presented orally and discussed by the Senate; passage of such a motion requires a simple majority.
5. Motions and resolutions:
- a. Any item on the agenda for which action is sought, except for motions to amend the Constitution, must include a one-page executive summary setting out the proposed action and the arguments for and against the action. [Based on Penn State report procedures.]
  - b. The executive summary must be made available, along with any supporting documentation or reports (if any), with the agenda and published no less than seven days before the meeting at which action is to be taken.
  - c. The executive summaries relating to all motions and resolutions will be made available, in paper form, at the start of each meeting.
  - d. For those agenda items that are moved from the floor by 2/3 vote of those senators present, the requirement of prior publication of an executive summary is waived, though except in unusual circumstances anyone planning on moving an agenda item from the floor should make an executive summary available at the beginning of the meeting.
6. Motion to change constitution [Modified version of Illinois practice, also UCLA]:
- a. May be initiated by any committee or member of the senate, but the proposal must go to the Committee on Constitution, Rules and

Legislation, and the language of the change must be proposed by that committee.

- In the event that the Committee on Constitution, Rules and Legislation refuses to consider a proposed change, a senator may present a motion to the Senate seeking to have it direct the constitution committee to draft language making a change to the Constitution. Passage of such a motion requires a 2/3 vote.
  - A motion of the sort referred to in the preceding paragraph may only seek to have the Senate direct the Committee on Constitution, Rules and Legislation to prepare a change to the Constitution, not change the Constitution.
- b. The report proposing a change in the Constitution must make it clear what the change is, either through interlineations of new language and striking out of old, or by parallel texts showing the effect of the changes.
  - c. All resolutions proposing amendments must indicate precisely what portion of the Constitution is to be amended, or where new language would fit into the constitution.
  - d. All resolutions proposing changes to the language of the Constitution must set out a statement of the rationale for the change.
  - e. Two-thirds of the senators present and voting must vote yes in order to pass an amendment, addition, or deletion to the Constitution.

### **Commentary**

#### **D. Meeting Procedure:**

1. The Chair of the Faculty Senate, or in his/her absence the Chair-Elect, shall preside at all Senate meetings. The meetings will be run according to the By-Laws of the University of Florida Faculty Senate and Sturgis' Code of Parliamentary Procedure (most recent edition). The Parliamentarian will act as *ex officio*, nonvoting member of the Senate to advise the Chair of any procedural rules or conflicts that arise.
2. Voting:
  - a. Motions or resolutions will be passed by a majority vote of the senators present and voting, except that changes to the Constitution cannot be made except by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the senators present and voting. [Consistent with current practice at UF.]

- b. Voting shall be by voice vote or a show of hands except that voting shall be by paper ballot or electronic ballot when voting for officers or electing senators to serve on a Senate committee, a joint University/Senate committee, or any other committee in which Senate participation is authorized by the Senate.
    - c. Any Senator may also request a vote be done by paper ballot or electronic voting. A simple majority vote is necessary to approve such a request.
  3. Debate:
    - a. The purpose of debate is to make sure that there is a suitable discussion of all issues that come before the Senate.
    - b. Closing debate:
      - Debate may only close on a motion and a vote of two-thirds of the senators present. [From Wisconsin practice.]
      - If, however, in the Chair's determination, debate has ceased to be productive, has become acrimonious, or is repetitive, the Chair may close debate. [Consistent with general parliamentary procedure.]
      - Where the chair has decided to close debate, any senator may move that the debate be reopened. This is a non-debatable motion, and if a majority of the senators present and voting agree, debate may be reopened.
  4. Only Senators may address the Senate except by invitation of the Steering Committee or the Chair of one of the five standing committees. *Ex officio* members of the Senate, administrators, and members of the Board of Trustees may speak when invited to do so by the Chair of the Senate.

## **Commentary**

### **E. Creating a culture of involvement:**

1. Helping senators understand the process:
  - b. May (or last) meeting of the Senate:
    - Introduce new members of the Senate and thank retiring members of the Senate (and officers) at the May meeting of the Senate.
    - Business of the May meeting should include:
      - Nominations for standing committees
      - Summary of past year's business by outgoing Senate Chair, and



- Outline of next year's business by incoming Senate Chair.
    - End of year reception in honor of those stepping down.
  - c. September (or first) meeting of the Senate:
    - Orientation(s) for new senators, introducing them to Senate procedure should occur before the first meeting of the year.
    - Note that another possibility is suggested by the practice at Virginia, which starts the year with an all afternoon retreat that follows a luncheon, and uses that retreat to introduce senators to the Senate's business and to major issues that will confront the Senate in the upcoming year.
  - d. Publish handbook or guide to senators, defining the committees, explaining the procedures, and send to newly elected senators before the May meeting. Post on the web. [Clemson practice.]
  - e. Hand out Constitution and By-Laws to senators each year.
  - f. Find better accommodations for Senate meetings, which permit more clearly divided seating for senators and guests and which permit senators to see one another better.
  - g. Provide modest refreshments (coffee, water, sodas) during the Senate meeting. [Consistent with normal meeting practice.]
2. Encouraging accountability.
- a. Establish By-laws providing that any senator who misses three meetings in an academic year loses his/her seat. [Based on practice at many universities, such as Case Western Reserve, Wisconsin. Note this is also consistent with UF Constitution provisions relating to membership on committees. Article III, Section 6, (c)(1).]
  - b. Post agenda on website seven days in advance, along with reports of committees and other matters to be considered, and send email notice of posting to entire faculty. [Consistent with provision requiring that agenda be published in this time frame, accords with AAUP checklist of traits of effective senates.]
  - c. Post minutes on website immediately after they are approved [consistent with AAUP checklist of traits of effective senates].
  - d. Encourage senators from the various colleges to establish methods of communicating senate activity with faculty [consistent with AAUP checklist of traits of effective senates]:
    - Through "communication senator" who sends emails to faculty of college through listserv, or by making reports at college meetings. [Based on practices in effect at the Levin College of Law, Journalism, and Health and Human Performance.]

- Consider creating a web-based senate newsletter. UCLA.
  - Require senate standing committees to create and maintain committee websites, linked to the senate website.
3. Facilitating the work of Senate:
    - a. Create an annual budget for the Senate to pay for [consistent with practice at other universities, including Clemson, recommended by AAUP]:
      - office staff, printing of materials, attendance of chair or chair-elect at AAUP annual meetings of faculty senate presidents or workshops on faculty senates, and
      - investigations of matters of interest to the senate or other work related to the senate.
    - a. Provide office staff to support officers and committees of the Senate, and work on senate webpage; provide established office space for the Senate [Consistent with AAUP recommendations.]
    - b. Provide that Senate officers receive release time for their work on the Senate. Provide for a mechanism by which other Senators whose work for the Senate in a given year is particularly burdensome may apply for release time, summer compensation for senate work, or for research leave in a subsequent semester. [UCLA, consistent with AAUP checklist of traits for effective senates]
    - c. Provide a parking decal for senators that allows them to park in all spaces (including carpool and metered spaces, but excluding handicap spaces), while on Senate business.
  4. Encouraging cooperation and respect between Senate, Administration, and Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and student unions, and any other university groups [consistent with AAUP traits of effective senates]
    - a. Arrange for participation of senators on committees of the Board of Trustees.
    - b. Arrange for creation of a President's Cabinet, which might include the President, Provost, Deans, Chair of the Senate, Student Government President, union (faculty and staff) presidents, and other people at the university, to meet on a weekly basis to discuss the state of the university. [Clemson practice].
    - c. Arrange for luncheons or breakfasts involving the Board of Trustees and some members of the Senate every semester, for informal exchanges of information.
    - d. Arrange for meetings or luncheons involving members of the senate and other constituent groups on campus, including student

government, graduate student union, staff associations, and the faculty union.

### **Commentary**

Initial draft prepared July 4, 2003

Minor revisions made after discussion with full committee, July 8, 2003

Proposed revisions made, August 1, 2002, further modifications made after a meeting of the full committee, August 6, 2003

Minority Report, prepared August 12, 2003

### **Appendix: Sources**

We relied on a number of sources in preparing this Report, among them: the current Constitution and By-laws of the UF Faculty Senate, Recommendations and materials on Faculty Senates prepared by the American Association of University Professors (the AAUP), the constitutions and by-laws of senates at a) the top 10 public universities, as identified by US News and World Report, b) the top ten universities in terms of NIH funding, c) SEC universities and the other schools in the Florida State University System (SUS), and d) universities with which members of the committee had some familiarity. In addition, our recommendations were shaped by discussions as a committee, and the feedback we received in response to our requests.

The following are links to a few of the sources we consulted. We have tried to provide a link to all the university senates that we refer to specifically in the Report.

AAUP Checklist of Effective Senates

<http://www.aaup.org/governance/resources/ttraits.htm>

Auburn University (see in particular, Faculty Handbook, section iv, 2)

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Case Western Reserve University (see also the Senate by-laws)

<http://www.cwru.edu/president/facsen/frames/handbook.htm>

<http://www.cwru.edu/president/facsen/frames/bylaws/bylaws.html>

Clemson University

<http://www.lib.clemson.edu/fs/FSHandbook/home.html>

College of William and Mary

<http://www.wm.edu/faculty-assembly/constitution.html>

Florida State University (see in particular Article IV)

<http://www.fsu.edu/~fasenate/constitution.html>

Pennsylvania State University (see also Report Checklist)

<http://plaza.ufl.edu/edale/senate%20committee/PennStateSenateReportChecklist.htm>

University of California, Los Angeles

<http://www.senate.ucla.edu/formsDocsPage.htm>

University of Florida, Constitution and By-laws of the Faculty Senate

<http://plaza.ufl.edu/edale/senate%20committee/UFConstitutionchange4-30-03FINAL.htm>

University of Illinois (see also by-laws and standing rules)

<http://www2.uiuc.edu/unit/senate/constitu.html>

<http://www2.uiuc.edu/unit/senate/bylaws.html>

<http://www2.uiuc.edu/unit/senate/standrul.html>

University of Tennessee (see also Guide for Committee Chairs)

<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/Bylaws.html>

<http://web.utk.edu/~senate/Guide--CommitteeChairs.html>

University of Virginia

[http://www.virginia.edu/facultysenate/c\\_blaws.html](http://www.virginia.edu/facultysenate/c_blaws.html)

University of Wisconsin

[http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/secfac/governance/FPP/Chapter\\_2.htm](http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/secfac/governance/FPP/Chapter_2.htm)

Vanderbilt University

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/facultysenate/const.htm>

Colleagues:

As part of its work this summer, the Senate Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness would like to get your sense of the Senate and how it works.

We are most interested in what you think the Senate's function or role in the University should be, and whether you think the Senate is currently fulfilling that role. We would also like to know what changes, if any, in its processes you think might make the Senate perform its function better.

- \* If you would like to simply write a statement giving us your views, you may do that.
- \* If you would prefer a more structured approach, we have set out a list of questions below and you may respond to them.

You may send your response by emailing me directly [edale@history.ufl.edu](mailto:edale@history.ufl.edu). If you would prefer to respond anonymously you can send me your response by interdepartment mail. My address is:

Elizabeth Dale  
Chair, Senate Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness  
Department of History  
PO Box 117320  
Room 025 Keene-Flint Hall  
University of Florida

**Please send us your response by  
July 6, 2003.**

Structured questions:

1. What do you think the UF Faculty Senate's function or role at the University is?
2. Do you think the UF Faculty Senate achieved its purpose in 2002-2003? .
3. What do you think the purpose of the Faculty Senate should be?
4. Do you think your non-Senate colleagues are interested in the work of the Senate some of the time, most of the time, or never? Why?
5. What do you think would make your non-Senate colleagues more interested in the work the Senate does?
6. In 2002-2003, what aspects of senate meetings did you find most worthwhile? Why?
7. Would you change these aspects in any way? If so, how?
8. In 2002-2003, what aspects of senate meetings did you find most frustrating? Why?
9. How do you think the aspects of senate meetings you found frustrating could be improved?
10. In 2002-2003 the Senate considered and passed a number of resolutions and motions. Were you satisfied with that process? Explain.
11. How could that process have been made better, from your perspective?
12. In 2002-2003 the Senate received a number of reports, written and oral, from both administrators and committees. Were you satisfied with those reports and that process?
13. How might you change the reporting process to improve it?
14. Did you find it easy to understand the Senate's practices when you started your term? If not, what exactly did you find hard to understand?
15. If the Senate had offered an orientation session for new Senators at the start of their term, would you have attended?
16. Can you think of any other way that the Senate might have made its procedures and practices clearer for new members?
17. In 2002-2003 what year of your senate term were you in? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Have you had previous terms on the UF Faculty Senate? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. If you served previous terms on the Senate, how would you compare the way the Senate worked then to the way it worked in 2002-2003?
19. Why did you agree to serve on the Senate in 2002-2003?
20. Do you feel your experience as a Senator in 2002-2003 was worthwhile? Why or why not?
21. Would you be willing to serve as a Senator again? Why or why not?
22. Approximately how many Senate meetings did you attend in 2002-2003? \_\_\_\_
23. If you attended fewer than 80% of the meetings, why?
24. Of the meetings you attended, did you usually:
  - a. Arrive at 3 PM and leave when the meeting was adjourned?
  - b. Arrive sometime after 3 PM and leave when the meeting was adjourned?
  - c. Arrive at 3 PM but have to leave early?
  - d. Arrive after 3 PM and leave early?
25. If you usually did not attend the entire meeting, why?

Are there any other changes that you think would make the Senate more effective?

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

Senate Committee on Senate Structure and Effectiveness

July 9, 2003

As part of its information finding, this Committee developed a questionnaire that was emailed (June 5) to all current senators. For reference, the questionnaire is posted on this [web site](#).

The questionnaire sought responses from the Senators about their understanding of the Senate's current function and role, about whether the function and role should be different and if so how, and about what changes, if any, in its processes might make the Senate perform its function better. In essence, the Committee wanted to know whether Senators were happy with what they have and to gain a sense of how they felt the Senate was evolving.

30 senators responded directly. Though the Committee members did not write responses, we find ourselves in substantial agreement with the themes set out in those responses, which we have summarized below. In essence, therefore, 37 senators or almost 25% responded, despite the timing (Summer term) and length of the questionnaire.

The themes of the responses were striking in their clarity and ubiquity. That enables us both to respect individual candor and avoid needless detail by summarizing.

Respondents' comments about the role and function of the Senate fell into the following broad categories:

<b>With respect to their sense of the Senate's present status and condition:</b>	<b>With respect to what they hoped it might become:</b>
Advisory	Legislative (policy setting)
Inconsequential	Consequential
Reactive	Proactive
Lacking priorities and unfocused	Having priorities, focused
Preoccupied with minutiae	Global perspective
Untutored Members	Trained Members
Viewed with cynicism	Guarded optimism

Though the vocabulary respondents used obviously varied, these dichotomies are unmistakable in the responses. That is particularly important because many of the respondents expressed a strong commitment to the long-term welfare and excellence of the University and the potential value of the Senate in that regard. There seems to be a significant reservoir of willingness to make a substantive and influential Senate succeed. Conversely, there is little interest in continuing a passive, advisory Senate.

### Links to other UF resources

Senate Constitution and By Laws

<http://plaza.ufl.edu/edale/senate%20committee/UFConstitutionchange4-30-03FINAL.htm>

Board of Trustees By Laws <http://www.trustees.ufl.edu/bylaws/index.html>

Florida Education Act University Rules

[http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Index&Title\\_Request=](http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Index&Title_Request=)

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**Other relevant links**

AAUP Traits of Effective Senates

<http://www.aaup.org/governance/resources/ttraits.htm>

AAUP Resources on College and University  
Governance

<http://www.aaup.org/governance/resources/>